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ABSTRACT

Most systems of administrative control include both formal and informal, explicit and implicit evaluative mechanisms that sense deviation from standards and activate corrective actions to return subordinates to acceptable levels of performance or to correct beliefs. A review of prior studies showed, however, that few school districts have specific standards against which they assess principal performance and outputs. This paper describes a study aimed at correcting some of these deficiencies (1) by employing the Natriello and Dornbusch conceptual model of evaluation, which identifies clearly delineated evaluation stages of allocating tasks, setting criteria, sampling performance and/or outputs, and appraising; (2) by examining all stages in the evaluation process, and (3) by gathering information from both superintendents and principals. A questionnaire sent to a random sample of 200 principals and to all 142 superintendents in a southern state yielded 149 usable returns from principals (74%) and 121 usable returns from superintendents (85%). Results showed that (1) the evaluation system is perceived to be specific and clear in task allocations; (2) a level of uncertainty exists regarding criteria setting; and (3) principals and superintendents disagree on how performance and outputs are sampled. More adequate communication between superintendents and principals is needed. Appended are two pages of references, two tables, and one figure. (IW)

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Pitfalls in the Evaluation of Principals

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Pitfalls in the Evaluation of Principals

Introduction

Managers are key actors in organizations providing the linkage between the technical core and the institutional level of the organization. They coordinate the flow of resources, structure productive elements, and foster actions which promote organizational goal attainment (Parsons, 1960; Thompson, 1967). In educational organizations, principals are middle managers who must coordinate and direct what Thompson (1967) calls "streams of institutionalized actions." Educational managers face a wide array of constraints and contingencies which shape their behavior and influence their normative development (Dwyer, 1985). Some of the most important forces on principals involve the actions taken by superiors to control and direct principals and their schools. These forces emanate from various controls in the administrative control and evaluation systems of school districts(Crowson and Morris, 1985; Peterson, 1984; Murphy, Hallinger, & Peterson, 1985).

Superiors institute systems of control to shape the norms, values, and behaviors of subordinates and to restrict the flow of resources to individuals and organizational units (Peterson, 1984). These systems of controls have formal and informal deviation-sensing evaluative mechanisms embedded in their structures. These evaluative mechanisms sense whether subordinates are following rules carefully, using resources effectively, behaving and acting in organizationally approved ways, conforming to the norms and values of the district, and satisfying powerful reference groups in the environment (Peterson, 1984).

Evaluative mechanisms sense deviation from a set of explicit or implicit standards and activate corrective actions to return subordinates to acceptable levels of performance or to correct beliefs. In many ways these mechanisms act like the thermostat in a house which senses the temperature in various rooms and activates either the heating or cooling system (Katz & Kahn, 1966). In organizations, these standards are in areas of performance, output, norms, and beliefs.

The evaluative mechanisms in school districts face a much more complex set of problems than the simple house thermostat. In school districts the "thermostat" must assess a complex set of conditions, try to determine what is the acceptable "standard" and then attempt to activate resources to correct the deviation, resources which are often not available or difficult to activate. Nonetheless, these mechanisms are in place and work in various ways to shape the work of principals by signaling expectations and by reshaping behaviors and output following deviations from the standard.

Systems of administrative control include both formal and informal, explicit and implicit evaluative mechanisms. While the informal and implicit evaluative mechanisms shape the work of principals, in this paper we will examine only formal, explicit mechanisms found in the evaluation systems used to direct and assess principals.

In this paper we will describe the components of a state-mandated evaluation system for principals using self reports from principals and superintendents regarding how those components are implemented. While many have examined the evaluation of teachers (Dornbusch & Scott, 1975; Natriello & Dornbusch, 1981; Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Pease, 1983), few have systematically studied the evaluation of principals using a theoretically-based conceptual framework (Duke & Stiggins, 1985).

Conceptual Framework

One of the most highly developed and empirically tested conceptual frameworks is found in the work of Dornbusch and Scott (1975) and Natriello and Dornbusch (1981). Their model of the evaluation process posits a set of clearly delineated stages. These stages include allocating tasks, criteria setting, sampling performance and/or outputs, and appraising (Natriello & Dornbusch, 1981, p.1)

Insert Figure 1 about here

Each stage represents a different group of specific tasks which guide and shape the effectiveness, reliability, and acceptance of evaluations by subordinates (Natriello & Dornbusch, 1981).

In the "allocating of tasks" stage superiors assign a set of tasks to principals. When tasks are "active", that is when the "resistance to successful performance is highly unpredictable" (e.g., remediating an incompetent teacher) then allocation occurs most often through delegation (Natriello & Dornbusch, 1981). When superiors delegate responsibility for a task, the subordinate is granted autonomy to decide the means to achieve the ends but may be held accountable for results. When tasks are "inert", that is when "resistance to successful performance is highly predictable" (p.2) (e.g., preparing attendance reports) then allocation occurs through directive or the specification of procedures. Directives and what Peterson (1984) calls behavior controls, specify what principals are to do, under what conditions, and at what time. These offer little discretion.

In the "criteria setting" stage superiors, sometimes with consultation of subordinates, establish the standards (criteria) on which the subordinate will be judged. Subordinates need to know both what they will be judged on

and the level they should achieve in the task. It follows that it is difficult to specify criteria for some tasks (e.g., hiring effective teachers) and relatively easy to set criteria for other tasks (e.g., budgeting enough for classroom materials). Ouchi (1979) notes the difficulty of controlling through the evaluation of outputs when the criteria for judging outputs are difficult to measure. If principals, like teachers, are unaware of the criteria or the standards they are to reach, they feel more vulnerable to the caprice of superiors and, alternately, may not direct their energies in the directions desired by the organization (Natriello & Dornbusch, 1981; Peterson, 1984).

During the "sampling performance and/or outputs" stage superiors monitor performance or outputs to gather data on task accomplishment and the production of goods and services. The frequency of this monitoring and the number of sources used to sample behavior and output affect the degree to which subordinates view the evaluation as soundly based and assess the reliability of the appraisal stage (Natriello & Dornbusch, 1981). Performance monitoring is often used to sample inert tasks and output monitoring for active tasks.

In the "appraisal" stage superiors assess the degree to which subordinates have achieved the standards or reached the criteria established for performance or output which was specified in an earlier stage (Natriello & Dornbusch, 1981). In this stage the clarity, specificity and reliability of the prior stages affect the precision and efficacy of the appraisal. If task allocation was not clear, then principals may not have worked on the central tasks. If the criteria for appraisal were not specific, then principals may have worked toward criteria they selected (See Turcotte, 1974 for a discussion of this phenomena). If performance or output samples were

biased or unreliable, then the appraisal will not be based on a valid sample of performance or outcomes. Thus, even a highly developed appraisal mechanism may produce an inaccurate or incorrect evaluation of performance or output. Yet without an appraisal stage, the evaluation process is incomplete.

The clarity and precision of each of these evaluation stages influences the quality and effectiveness of the evaluation. We need to understand how each part is enacted to understand the whole. Organizational control through evaluation is comprised of several parts, each of which contributes to the whole. The parts must interact to produce reliable and effective evaluations or unreliable, counterproductive assessments. Present conceptually driven, empirical knowledge of the evaluation process for principals is incomplete (Duke & Staggins, 1985; Harrison, 1985). Prior studies have noted that the tasks of principals are diverse, complex, and often specified in general job descriptions. Principals frequently report they are not sure what they are supposed to be doing (Peterson, 1982, 1984). With this type of work, the allocation process is often unclear.

Descriptive studies suggest that principals often are unsure what criteria superiors use to evaluate their actions and outputs or which criteria carry the most weight (Duke & Stiggins, 1985; Peterson, 1984). This suggests that the criteria setting stage is frequently neither made explicit nor clear.

Existing research also finds that sampling of performance and outputs in many districts is infrequent, unsystematic, and relies more on opinions of important reference groups than on quantifiable measures of performance or output (Duke & Stiggins, 1985; McDowell, 1954; Peterson, 1984). The sampling stage thus remains problematic for many principals.

Finally, the few studies which identify actions by superiors in the appraisal stage note that while some districts employ a systematic approach to assessing student performance, accomplishment of objectives in a management-by-objectives system, or the quality of teacher evaluation, a large proportion of districts do not have specific standards against which they assess principal performance and outputs (Duke & Staggins, 1985; Peterson, 1984). Often the appraisal stage as in other organizations depends on reference group assessments, intuitive evaluations of performance, and diffuse criteria of effectiveness (Thompson, 1967).

Prior studies provide an incomplete picture of the evaluation process. None use a conceptual framework to guide the investigation. None look at the four stages of the evaluation process. And some do not query subordinates about the system. In this study, we will try to correct some of these deficiencies, building on these useful prior studies, by employing the Natriello & Dornbusch (1981) conceptual model, by examining all stages in the evaluation process, and by gathering information from both superintendents and principals.

Methodology

In order to increase the generalizability of results, we sampled a large group of superintendents and principals. Given the wide range of practices across school systems, we selected a state where a standard principal evaluation process had been adopted. This evaluation system provided general outlines of the evaluation process, but left some discretion in the hands of local districts. By having a large sample we increased our generalizability, but lost the rich detail of case studies (Yin, 1984).

Nonetheless, we must note some of the potential limits of self-report data as suggested by an anonymous reviewer to the AERA proposal. First, while principals have an interest in reporting accurately about the ways they are evaluated, superintendents may inaccurately report what they do since they are more vulnerable to sanctions if the study discovered substantial digressions from stated policies (Anonymous Reviewer). Attempts were made to ameliorate this problem by placing no identification numbers on the survey. Nonetheless, superintendents' self-reports may be biased in an administratively positive direction. Second, there are always problems in drawing inferences and comparing groups on Likert scaled responses (for example, principals and superintendents may have different perceptions of what "frequent supervisory visits" means) and self-reported rankings of the relative importance of various criteria (e.g., the relative importance of various "results" of principals' work). These problems do limit the degree to which we can describe the actual administrative behaviors and the actual application of criteria when principals are evaluated. Nonetheless, they provide a mapping of beliefs about and perceptions of this process, a mapping which can guide further research on the process as it is occurs in districts.

Population and Sample

Questionnaires were sent to a simple random sample of 200 principals in a southern state and to all 142 superintendents. Of those sent questionnaires, 74 percent of the principals (N= 149) and 85 percent of the superintendents (N=121) returned them in usable condition.

Instrument and Data Analysis

Based on the methodological approaches taken by earlier studies, a questionnaire was designed to gather information about the ways superintendents evaluate principals. The questionnaire used open-ended and

Likert scaled questions to gather data on criteria used in the evaluation process, the focus and purpose of evaluation, the sources of information used, and the results or outputs principals perceive to be important to superintendents.

Responses to open-ended questions were categorized and frequencies tallied, while means for scaled questions were calculated (with "strongly disagree" = -2 to "strongly agree" = 2). Descriptive statistics were used to show the patterns of the response of principals and superintendents separately. A comparison of percentage differences showed discrepancies between principals' and superintendents' responses on some items.

As we mentioned above, we did not place identification numbers on the questionnaires in an effort to increase response rate and reliability of superintendents' responses. This decision made it impossible to compare the responses of principals to those of their superintendents. Rather, comparisons will be between superintendents and principals as groups. Further studies should attempt to match principal and superintendent responses by district.

This paper discusses the major stages in the evaluation process. We begin by discussing the allocation of tasks and the setting of criteria, then turn to the sampling of performance and outputs, appraisals and the ways superintendents communicate them to principals. Finally, we will discuss the implications of this research for both theories of the evaluation process and for the practice of evaluation in educational enterprises.

Allocation of Tasks and Setting of Criteria

In their model of the evaluation process, Natriello and Dornbusch (1981) identify the allocating of tasks as the first component of the

procedure, followed by the setting of criteria for performance. Descriptions of the tasks of the principals were set forth by the state board of education when it adopted a job description of the principal in 1981. The job description stated the purpose of the principal as follows:

> To serve as the chief administrator of a school in developing and implementing policies, programs, curriculum, activities, and budgets in a manner that promotes the educational development of each student and the professional development of each staff member. In addition the board identified 23 duties and responsibilities of the principal.

Furthermore, the state performance appraisal instrument outlined five major task domains of the principalship. The domains include (a) General Planning and Oversight; (b) School and Classroom Objectives; (c) Personnel Organization and Management; (d) Clientele Relationship and Their Management; and (e) Allocation of Supplies, Equipment, and Support Services. Each of these domains contain from two to four major functions, with several sub-functions specified for appraisal purposes.

Both the superintendents and principals responding to the survey believe that the major functions, outlined above, provide an accurate description of the principal's role. Nearly 81 percent of the superintendents and 72 percent of the principals responding concurred. However, they are not as certain that the appraisal instrument makes the criteria for principal performance clear. A slight majority of the superintendents (51%) believe that criteria for performance is clear. Overall they report some uncertainty.

Natriello and Dornbusch (1981) contend that criteria for performance appraisal must be specific enough to allow for consistency among evaluators. One item on the questionnaire dealt with the superintendents'

interpretation of criteria for principal performance. When asked if superintendents from system to system in the state agree upon the criteria for principal effectiveness, superintendents and principals reported a higher level of uncertainty than any other item in the questionnaire. The perception is that superintendents from system to system do not agree upon the criteria for principal effectiveness.

In order to perform successfully, workers must have a clear understanding of their superiors' expectations. Nearly 80 percent of the superintendents reported that they make their expectations of principal performance clear. While the majority of principals concur (58%), nearly 42 percent are uncertain or feel that expectations are not made clear to them. Superintendents are not communicating their expectations to principals as successfully as they believe they are.

Along similar lines, the two groups differ in their opinions regarding the results or outcomes of the principalship considered to be important to the superintendent. Earlier research (Peterson, 1984) identified results of the principalship that principals believe are important to central office. Using a similar list, we asked respondents to rank eight different results in order of perceived importance to their superiors. The two groups agreed on which were the top five, but differed considerably on the order of the five (Table 1).

Insert Table 1 about here

Principals perceive the reaction of the public, positive or negative, to be the most important indicator of principal performance to the superintendent. This agrees with Peterson's (1984) findings. Superintendents, on the other hand, agree that public reaction is important,

but they rank it fifth. Eighty-one percent of the principals mentioned public reaction as one of the top five results to only 58 percent of the superintendents, suggesting greater saliency in the perceptions and lives of principals.

Judging from the top three items ranked by principals--public reaction, atmosphere of the school, and teacher performance and morale, it appears that principals believe that superintendents are concerned with how their work is perceived by others. Principals rank "quality of instruction," criteria which is difficult to measure, fourth. While superintendents ranked it first. Student performance as measured by test results is ranked fifth by principals and fourth by superintendents, far down on the rankings. Clearly, instructional performance is perceived as more important than instructional outcomes.

There was more agreement among the superintendent group than the principal group regarding the results of principal performance watched by the superintendent. As we see in Table 1, while the number one result identified by the principals was mentioned by 81 percent of the group, 87 percent of the superintendents mentioned their number one response (general quality of instruction). Furthermore, while 79 percent of the principals identified the atmosphere of the school as being among the top five results watched by the superintendent (giving it the number two ranking among principals), a higher percentage of superintendents (82%) included this result in their list even though it was ranked only number three amongst their group.

To further emphasize the point, a larger proportion of superintendents checked three results (general quality of instruction, teacher performance and morale, and atmosphere of the school) than were checked by principals'

for their response ranked number one. It may be that while superintendents have a clear idea of what results or outputs they desire of principals, communication of these expectations are not being received by principals. In short, while these tasks were allocated, criteria were not understood by principals.

Major differences between the two groups appear in their perceptions of the importance of four results. The principals perceive that public reaction is the most important indicator of their performance for the superintendent. Eighty-one percent of the principals cited these reactions to only 58 percent of the superintendents.

Other differences point to disagreement between these two groups about criteria. The largest percentage difference in responses deals with the principals "not making waves." While both groups ranked this result eighth, only 3 percent of the superintendents mentioned it as compared to 29 percent of the principals--a 26 percent difference. The fourth largest difference (21 percent) is the criteria "general quality of instruction." The superintendents ranked this number one with 87 percent of the group mentioning it, while in the principals top five results, only 66 percent mentioned it. Here we see that principals perceive different criteria than do their superiors. These differences may affect their work.

Subordinates tend to focus their energies, apply resources, and solve problems they perceive to be important to their superiors, and which are the focus of evaluation (Turcotte, 1974). This makes it important that performance expectations and criteria used in the evaluation process are understood by subordinates. Beliefs about what is important will influence the work of administrators, whether or not their beliefs are accurate. Our findings reveal that both superintendents and principals are somewhat uncertain regarding the criteria for principal performance as set forth by

the principal performance Appraisal instrument. Furthermore, principals and superintendents have substantially different beliefs about what criteria are applied and in what order of importance. In addition, as Natriello and Dornbusch (1981) point out regarding teacher evaluation, evaluators often assume that those they are evaluating understand what is expected of them and know the performance or outputs on which they are being evaluated. Our data reveal that while superintendents believe they are communicating their expectations to principals, 42 percent of the principals are uncertain or do not understand what their superintendents expect of them.

For effective evaluation to occur, superintendents must communicate their expectations of performance to principals in ways these expectations can be received accurately. Otherwise, principals are likely to direct their efforts in the areas they only partially understand or intuit to be important to the superintendent (i.e., the principal spending more time as a public relations person than an instructional leader or applying energies toward appeasing their reference groups'--teachers and PTO--demands, or toward accomplishing personal, self-aggrandizing ends) (Downs, 1967).

Sampling of Performance or Outputs

The sampling of performance or outputs stage follows the allocation of tasks and setting of criteria in the Natriello and Dornbusch Model. The way information is collected to assess performance is an important component of any assessment system. Equally important is that the evaluatee understands the data collection process.

Only 51 percent of the principals claim to know precisely how superintendents gather information used in their evaluations. The administrators were provided with a list of eight methods superintendents use to gather data for principal evaluations (Peterson, 1984). Both groups

were asked to rank the top five methods they thought superintendents used to gather data on principal performance and outputs (Table 2). These data specify the perceived sampling procedures of superiors.

Insert Table 2 about here

Few principals report knowing precisely how the superintendent gathers data to evaluate their performance. Nonetheless, when asked to check which sources they thought were used, 87 percent said they thought superintendents used community and parents as one source of information. It ranked in the top five sources reported. This is consistent with their ranking of public reaction as the number one indicator of principal performance watched by the superintendent. Superintendents also mentioned the community and parents as being an important source of information, but not to the extent reported by principals.

As Table 2 indicates, the groups rank the major sources superintendents utilize in the appraisal process about the same. They generally agree on how performance and outputs are sampled. Major differences lie in the relative frequency that community and parents and board members are mentioned as sources of information. Fifty percent of the principals mentioned board members as one of the top five sources of information, while only 31 percent of the superintendents did so.

Another key dimension of the sampling stage is frequency of sampling. The most direct method of sampling principal performance is by visiting the school and observing the principal at work. Superintendent and principal responses reveal a major difference of opinion concerning the frequency of direct supervision.

As one principal writes, "It is extremely important that the superintendent make several visits to the school. Unfortunately, ours does not." Another wrote, "Last year I was never visited by the evaluator, and I received all 'superior performance' ratings--not effective or helpful to me." These principals may not view the evaluations as soundly based because sampling by observation was infrequent. Nearly 81 percent of the superintendents report that they frequently visit the school, while only 37 percent of the principals report this. The majority of principals (60%) reported infrequent visits compared to 17 percent of the superintendents--a 43 percent difference. In general, subordinates often view evaluations as unsoundly based when their work is infrequently sampled (Natriello & Dornbusch, 1981).

Although the particular appraisal instrument we examined is generally more detailed and specific than most, some inconsistencies in implementation are occuring, in part perhaps, due to the special nature of principal's work (Peterson, 1978). Findings reveal that while superintendents think they are promoting instructional leadership, principals may be receiving the message that relations with the community and school board are more important. Similarly, while superintendents perceive that they frequently visit the school, principals perceive less frequent visiting. These differences suggest that there may be substantial discrepancies in the ways superiors and subordinates view performance sampling.

Appraisal and Communications to Principals

Communication, or its lack, is a recurring theme in this study. The communication of expectations was problematic during the allocation of tasks and the setting of criteria stages. Only 58 percent of the principals reported that the communication of superintendents' performance expectations

was clear, contrasted with nearly 80 percent of the superintendents who believed this. Similarly, we found a discrepancy regarding indicators of principal performance and their importance to the superintendents (Table 1).

The communication of expectations is a critical component of an evaluation system. If principals believe that the superintendent is more concerned with public reaction and building management than instruction, they will pattern their behavior to conform to their perceptions of the superintendent's expectations.

Frequent communication to subordinate is key during every stage of the evaluation process. In communicating results of appraisals, both positive and negative feedback are required to improve performance. Both groups in this study report that superintendents frequently communicate satisfaction with principal performance. While the two groups generally agree that the superintendent frequently communicates satisfaction, there is disagreement regarding the frequency of communicating dissatisfaction.

The groups disagreed on how frequently superintendents communicated dissatisfaction with principal performance. Superintendents reported they frequently communicated dissatisfaction with principal performance, while principals reported that dissatisfaction was not frequently communicated. Eighty-three percent of the superintendents perceived that they frequently communicated satisfaction, while only 59 percent reported themselves as frequently communicating dissatisfaction. This may be the case for several reasons. There may be a reluctance on the part of the superintendent to express dissatisfaction and so they do not communicate it; they may believe they are giving negative feedback more frequently than they are; or principals may be interpreting as neutral or positive some of the negative communications sent them by superintendents. Whatever the reason,

principals do not believe they are receiving negative feedback as frequently as superintendents believe they are communicating such feedback.

Summary

The data provide a comprehensive view of the evaluation system system of principals when it is formal, standardized, and complex. In summary, we find:

1. Superintendents have a more consistent perception than do the principals of the process and generally feel more positive toward it.

2. Principals report being less clear regarding that what is actually occurring in the evaluative process as indicated by a wider distribution of principal responses.

3. Principals and superintendents do not perceive the same actions occurring in the evaluation of principal performance.

4. Principals believe that superintendents rely heavily upon community opinions as a gauge of principal effectiveness, while superintendents report less reliance on these opinions.

5. Superintendents report employing a number of methods to gather data for the evaluation of principals. More principals report that the community is the major source of data, while superintendents report that the principal is their major source of information.

6. Superintendents report that they are are most concerned with the quality of instruction, while principals feel that public reaction and management are the major concerns of the superintendent during evaluations.

The findings indicate that (a) the evaluation system is perceived to be clear and specific in the allocation of tasks, (b) a level of uncertainty exists regarding the setting of criteria, and (c) principals and superintendents disagree on how performance and outputs are sampled.

Similar to what Peterson (1984) found, principals perceive parents to be a key source of evaluative information. They report that management and public reaction are two of the most important "results" of principals' work (Tables 1 and 2). In contrast, superintendents report other sources of information (e.g., the principal) as being central. Most superintendents (83%) believe that instructional leadership is more important than management or public relations while 43 percent of the principals believe their superiors feel that management is more important.

Furthermore, both principals and superintendents agree that satisfaction with performance is frequently communicated. In contrast, principals report that superintendents do not communicate dissatisfaction as frequently as superintendents believe they do.

Overall, even with structured, state-mandated principal evaluation systems we find pitfalls in the evaluation of process just as Peterson (1984) and Duke and his associates (1985) found in less structured systems. Criteria are often not communicated to principals clearly, sampling is sometimes infrequent or dependent on biased sampling procedures or potentially unreliable providers of data, and appraisal uses standards derived more from reference group assessments than quantitative appraisals of behavior and performance.

Discrepancies in educational evaluation systems seem to occur during several stages: during the setting of criteria, the sampling of performance and outputs and when feedback is communicated. These are key stages of the evaluation process. If principals are to improve their performance, these stages should be clear, specific, and known by both evaluator and evaluatee.

The study reveals that many of the pitfalls of evaluating principals (Natriello & Dornbusch, 1981) also are found in the evaluation of teachers.

To overcome these pitfalls superintendents must make their expectations of principal performance clear, insure that principals understand the tasks they are to accomplish, the criteria used to assess performance, the type of data used, and the ways performance and outputs are appraised. Additionally, more frequent communication regarding principal performance, with superiors communicating dissatisfaction as well as satisfaction, would help improve the work of these managers by providing useful information on problems to correct, outputs to maintain, and tasks to improve. If these organizational thermostats are to work to improve the effectiveness of principals, then their inner workings must be fine-tuned and calibrated for the complex world of schools and school management.

Considerable further research should take off from this study to further our understanding of the evaluation process. First, a study should collect data and compare responses of superintendents to that of their principals, looking for organizational and behavioral characteristics which distinguish dyads with consistent perceptions and those with discrepant ones. District size as well as the communication medium of the superintendent may affect the degree to which subordinates receive and decode accurately messages about job performance. Second, research should be conducted which examines on site the evaluation process of principals. While a costly investigation, it would provide an accurate picture of the behavioral realities of the process. In addition, the differential affect of evaluation on principal performance and outcomes could be collected and compared to the ways different stages of the process are enacted. Finally, a study should be conducted which examines the relationship between perceived criteria used to assess principals, principal time use, and student academic achievement. It seems reasonable to assume that, on average, principals will

apply their energies and expend their time on activities they believe are important to superiors and which they believe are evaluated. Where the criteria are perceived to be student performance, we would expect principals to spend more time on tasks related to instruction, with student achievement increasing over time. Alternately, where the criteria are perceived to be administrative work or public reaction, we would expect principals to spend their energy and time on increasing their scores on these results, with instruction and student achievement faltering.

Teacher evaluation has gained considerable attention in recent years. It is time to apply more attention to the question of how superintendents evaluate principals, under what conditions, and to what end. With more knowledge about this process, practitioners will be able to improve the assessment and direction of some 100,000 school principals and scholars will be able to increase our understanding of the constraints on managers in educational organizations.

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FIGURE 1

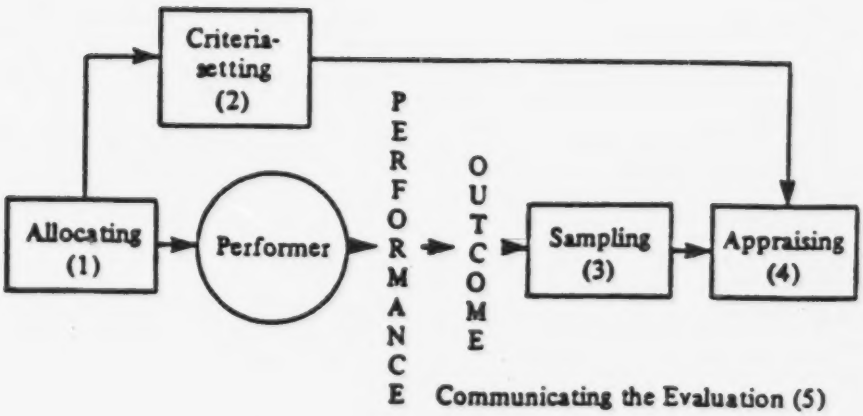

FIGURE 1
A Model of the Evaluation Process

From Pitfalls in the evaluation of teachers by principals, by G. Natriello and S. M. Dornburch, 1981, The Administrator's Norebook. 29, p. 1. Copyright by The University of Chicago.

Table 1

Results of the Principalship the Superintendent Views as Indicators of Principal Performance

Results	Superintendents			Principals		
	Rank	M	%M	Rank	M	%M
General quality of instruction	1	99	87	4	96	66
Teacher performance and morale	2	96	84	3	102	70
Atmosphere of school	3	94	82	2	114	79
Student performance and progress: test scores	4	79	69	5	91	62
Public reaction: positive or negative	5	66	58	1	118	81
Student behavior and principal's relations with students	6	63	55	7	62	43
Adherence to system rules and procedures	7	30	26	6	69	48
Not "making waves"	8	4	3	8	42	29
Others	8	4	3	9	5	3

Rank = indicates the ranking of the result by respondent group

M = number of times a response was mentioned, subjects were given a list with all items and asked to rank the top five

% M = the percentage of respondents mentioning a particular result (These data are reported in Harrison, 1985.)

Table 2

Perceived Sources of Data Superintendents Use for the Evaluation of Principals

	Superintendents			Principals		
Information Source	Rank	M	%M	Rank	M	%M
The principal directly	1	106	87	2	112	75
Central office personnel	2	92	76	3	101	68
Superintendent	3	83	69	5	85	57
Community and parents	4	82	68	1	129	87
Teachers	5	78	64	4	94	63
Reports, written materials	6	67	55	6	75	50
School Board	7	38	31	6	75	50
Test scores	8	15	12	8	26	17
Others	9	6	5	9	8	6

Rank = indicates the ranking of the information by respondent group

M = number of times a response was mentioned, subjects were given a list with eight information sources and asked to rank the top five used by the superintendent

%M = the percentage of respondents mentioning a particular item

(These data are reported in Harrison, 1985.)